A TRVE
AND CERTAINE
RELATION

Of a STRANGE-BIRTH,

which was borne at *Stone-houſe* in the Pariſh of *Plimmouth*, the 20. of *October*. 1635.

TOGETHER

with the Notes of a Ser-mon, preached *Octob*. 23. 1635. in the Church of *Plimmouth*, at the interring of the ſayd Birth.

Vpon Hoſ. 11. 3.

By *Th.B. B.D. Pr. Pl.*

LONDON,
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To the Curious *Beholder* of *the former Picture.*

Deare Countrey-man.

NOT the meere fiction of the over-daring Picturer doest thou here behold: But (if he have done his part) the true Pourtraiture of the worke of God, presented to the world to be seene and to be admired.

Two things I have to deliver to thine eare, which this figure cannot convey unto thine eye. First, what it intendeth: Next, how thou maiest correct the Picture, if it need amending.

For the first; it intendeth to acquaint thee with this story. In the Countie of *Devon*, and in the Parish of the famous Towne of *Plimmouth*, there is a Village called *Stone-house*; *Viculum Piscatorium* I may justly terme it, a pretty little Fisher-towne, for it consisteth mostly of men that live by the Sea, and gaine their livelihood by the water. In this village there dwelleth one *John Per-*

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ſons a Fiſherman, whoſe wife having fulfilled the iuſuall moneths and weekes of womens burdens, upon the twentieth day of this preſent moneth *October* fell in travell, and by the helpe of a ſecond Mid-wife (through Gods mercy and goodneſſe) was the poore mother (after the wearie travell of thirteene or foureteene painefull houres) ſafely delivered of the burden. A Birth not more painfull to the Mother (tho very painefull doubtleſſe beeing ſtill-borne,) then ſtrange and wonderfull to all the beholders. The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing, with admiration: and, as it falleth out in ſuch a caſe, ſoone is the fame thereof ſpread all abroad. Towne and Countrey commeth in to ſee, that hereafter they might (as I for my part muſt) ſay; At ſuch a time, in ſuch a place, I ſaw the ſtrangeſt birth in all reſpects, that ever I ſaw or heard before. Two heads, and neckes, two backes, and ſets of ribbes, foure armes and hands, foure thighes and legges: in a word, from head to heele (ſo farre as the eye could diſcerne) two compleat and perfect bodies, but concorporate and ioyned together from breaſt to belly, two in one.

For the ſecond thing propounded, *viz.* how to correct the picture, if it need amendment; take this. When I firſt caſt mine eye upon them lying on the table, I ſaid, ſurely if thoſe children had bin living, Art might have cauſed a juſt ſeparation of them, for I conceived them to bee no other than two bodies joyned together in one common skin. But I ſoone perceived mine Errour, when putting

ting my finger to feele the Collar the Cannell-bone (I meane that place where you see them begin to joyne together) I found that they had but one breast-bone common to them both, and by it, as by a partition wall, were their two bodies (as two chambers) both joyned & separated: joyned together in respect of the externall bulke, separated in respect of the internall contents. This concorporation lasted downe to the Navell or a little beneath, which also was in common to them both, I still speak of what the eye could see, happily so soone as that string of the umbilicall vessels, by which the mothers wombe supplied food and nourishment to the birth had passed the skinne, it might dispart it selfe. But outwardly it was one in common. Whence also it was conjectured, that though these twinnes might have several hearts, and lungs answerable to their severall heads and neckes, yet but one common Liver to them both. The truth of this conjecture I leave to the Colledge of Physitians to discover, that is not my profession, nor will I presume to determine any thing in anothers Art, onely this Obiection I have against it: that supposing one common Liver, it must either gird them round or be misplaced in one of them: for turning brest to brest, and belly to belly, you ioyne the left side of the one body to the right side of the other: so that I say, except the liver do compasse it round, it shall be misplaced in the one.

Os fistula.

But to returne to the story. These two twins were not more neerely ioyned in the bulk of bo-

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dy, than they were in all parts and proportions like to one another where they were disparted; so that two the likest twins that ever you saw were not more like: nay the glasse cannot (I thinke) give a truer answer to the face than these were each to other. Which I doe the more boldly affirme, because having satisfyed mine eye with beholding them on the one side as they lay, I caused the women to turne the other side, and laying them as before (face to face, and foot to foot) I could perceive no difference in them at all from what I had seene before. One thing I forgot, till it was too late: which if I had remembred, I verily perswade my selfe, might have been done, *viz.* To lay them one upon another. The which I mention, lest happily any might conceive that the ioyncture of their bodies might leane to one side more than to another. I was about to aske the women whether the mother felt them living in the wombe; when presently I corrected my selfe, seeing each part and limbe, yea, and the whole body of either growne (as indeed it was) to a iust maturity: each by himselfe, had they beene sundered, had been a iust birth; having haire on the heads, nailes on their hands and toes, nay which is more (except the women were much deceived) they had some teeth in their head: and to confesse the truth, I thought so too, till others that had more skil and experience perswaded me to the contrary. Howsoever, the children were each of them as compleat and perfect as Births use to be.

Vpon

Vpon theſe grounds I corrected my ſelfe in my former intended queſtion: for how ſhould they grow to that perfection of ſtature, had they wanted life? But the mid-wife and the women told me, that they were living and lively ſome few houres before they were borne: So that in all likely-hood, had a skilfull hand been made uſe of at the firſt, they might have lived to ſee the light, if not to inioy it. But God that gave them a life and beeing in the wombe, knowing that life upon earth would have beene a burden to them, provided better for them, and tooke them to himſelfe.

Thus have I given a true, and I thinke a full narration of this worke of wonder which God hath ſhewed here amongſt us. And with it, I am content to ſend abroad ſome few notes prepared for the confluence of people, met together, when this birth was layed into the earth. Something me thought was fitting to be commended to them that ſaw it, while the thing was freſh in mind; and that ſomething ſuch as it is: loe here it is. Rather would I ſhame my ſelfe in being over-buſie, than be wanting in what I conceit may not be unprofitable to the countrey wherein I live. Read then theſe notes, And if thou count not this halfe houre ill beſtowed, thou wilt I truſt (I deſire thou wouldeſt) pray for him, who if thou love the Lord *Ieſus* in ſincerity, prayeth for thee, that thou maieſt proſper and be in health, even as thy ſoule proſpereth. *Farewell.*

Plimmouth, Octob. 30.

1635.

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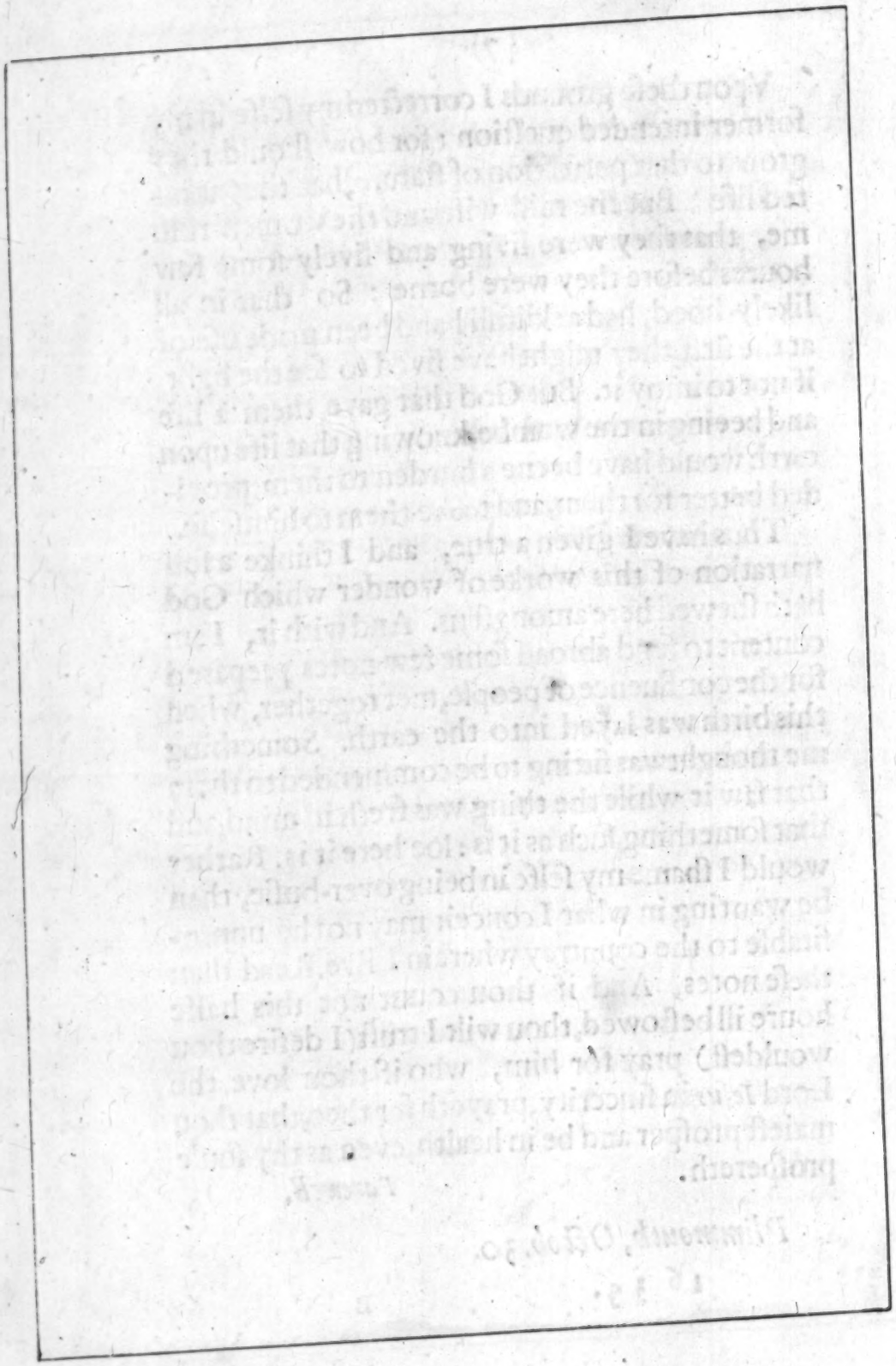

Heb. 11. 3.

Being dead, yet ſpeaketh.

AS the Word of God, ſo the Workes of God are for our Doctrine and inſtruction. The works of Creation teach us, ſaith Saint *Paul*, Gods eternall power and God-head. The works of his providence are not behind hand with us: and therefore ſaith the Holy Prophet, *Day unto day uttereth ſpeech, and night unto night ſheweth knowledge.* True this is in the ordinary and common workes of providence: But much more remarkable in thoſe that are extraordinary, when either the courſe of Nature is hindred, as the Sea and Sunne ſtopt in the midſt of their Carrier: or altered, as when the Sunne went backe-ward in the daies of *Hezechiah*. Touching which, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *Hee hath made his wonderfull workes to be remembred*; or as the words ſtand in the Originall, and the Greeke tranſlation. A memoriall hath he made to his wonderful works, *id eſt*, Hee hath ordained and commanded that they ſhould be remembred; Good reaſon, that where God with his finger pointeth forth ſomething in ſpeciall to the ſonnes of men, they ſhould follow it with the Eye of the body, till the eye of the ſoule, *viz.* the underſtanding ſpirit have thence received ſome inſtruction.

Rom. 1. 10.

Pſal. 19. 2.

Exod. 14.
Ioſ. 10.

Pſal. 111. 4.

ZeKeA
GNaSaH
LeNiPhLeAo
Thall.
Μνείαν ἐποιήσατο θαυμασίων αὐτοῦ.

Not onely the other Creatures: but alſo the Sonnes of men are otherwhiles made the object of theſe wonderfull workes of God: Or if you had rather call it the ſub-

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ject matter, on which he stampeth the markes of his Providence, either in hindering, or in altering the Ordinary course of Nature, sometimes in the conception, sometimes in the births of our expected and desired issue.

Conceptio est actio uteri, cum maris et fœminæ semen fœcundum ab eo excipitur, miscetur, fovetur, ejusque vis ad propriũ munus exequendum excitatur Dan. Sennert. Med. li. 4. part. 2. Sect. 4. cap. 4.

Conception, I count the naturall and proper worke of the wombe, in receiving, retaining, and ripening the seed for the Birth. The wombe is by the hand of God, sometimes closed up, that it receiveth not, as in the case of *Abimilechs* family, *Gen.* 20. sometimes opened or rather loosened, that it retayneth not, as in the case of Abortive and untimely births. Sometimes weakened, that it ripeneth not the birth, either not at all, or at least not within the just time. And all these doe teach us the presence of Gods Providence. Well may wee say, The hand of God hath beene there. It is hee that thus hath hindered the worke of the wombe, and withheld the blessing of a good Conception. So for the birth.

Vide Sennertum capite de partu tardo. *Qui ex historiis confirmat partum nonnunquam differri ad mensem* 13. 14. 15. 18. 20. 23. 24. *Hæc rara (inquit) et pene miraculosa sunt; acciduntque procul dubio ob semen debile, uterique calorem languidum, quibus de causis et fœtus tardius absolvitur, et expultrix facultas languet.*

Birth I must call that which properly and from the Latine we might call Parturition. This doth God by the hand of his speciall providence hinder sometime in part, sometime in whole: So that whereas all times of the womans Travell and labour are full of sorrow, yea (as the Philosopher saith, *Aristot. de Historia Animalium, Lib. 7. cap. 9* and the Scripture it selfe in part doth confirme the same) more ful of difficulty and danger than any other creatures (an evident demonstration of

Partus præter-naturalis est, triplex. Difficilis, Nullus, et Cæsareus. *Difficilis, ut in* Agrippis. *Quibus nomen inditum est (Authore* Gellio Noctium Atticarum lib. 16. ca. 16 *eo quod in nascendo, non caput, sed pedes primi extiterant, scil. ut Agrippæ dicantur ab ægritudine et pedibus; Cum potius ab ægritudine partus; qui non tantum fit ex pedibus, sed ex manibus; præsertim tamen ex*

of the Hand of God, visiting the first sinne of our Grandmother *Evah*, upon all the sex) whereas I say all times are full of sorrow, of feare and frightfulnesse; some doe receive an increase and multiplication, by such accidents supervenient, and unexpected dangers of births not capable of deliverance till God by the hand of speciall Art vouchsafe his gracious helpe, and good assistance. Of these therefore, as of the former, well may wee say, *Digitus dei*, It is the finger of God that hath beene here, and manifested his presence by hindering the common and ordinary course of Nature in the Birth of the Wombe.

mole corporis obversa et exitum ambiente; prout patet ex Senner to cap. de partu difficili praeternaturali. Partus Nullus dicitur, quoties infans excludi nequeat; frustraque conatur misera parturiens se ipsam onere suo liberare et expedire, mortuo nimirum foetu, qui nisi vel medicamentis expellatur, vel Chirurgi opera extrahatur, mortem et miseriam matri minitatur. Partus Caesareus Caesari nomen fecit. Ille enim qui primus Caesaris nomen adeptus est, ab eo dictus fertur, quod caeso matris utero natus fuerit. Caesares quod ex utero excisi sunt, nominantur; ipsaque illa actio dicitur partus Caesareus. Ex his plerique mortui; nonnulli vivi; idque (quod raro accidit) matre superstite et revalescente.

As in hindering, so also in altering and changing the course of Nature, doth God call man to an observation of his Providence: Nay heere more than in any thing else doth hee shew forth his workes of wonder: understand me still to speake of the Conception and of the Births of the sonnes of men. What variety of strange births doe wee see and heare of. Strange births wee call them: more properly, wee might terme them strange Conceptions: for what the wombe in Conception formeth, that is not usually altered in the birth. What varietie (I say) of strange-birthes doe wee see and heare of? Strange in the quantitie of (a) stature: strange in the (b) number of parts: Strange in the

(a) *Stature.* This is sometimes Giant-like; otherwhiles Dwarfish and Pigmey-like. Sometimes beyond, sometimes beneath and short of the ordinary, usuall and common stature of mankinde; and as it thus falleth out in respect of the whole body, so sometimes in the parts. One or 2 parts of the body, being of a different proportion; bigger or lesser than the rest.

(b) Number of parts. The ſtrangeneſſe here is in deſect or exceſſe. Deſect, when one or both hands or feet are wanting: Such was that woman which wee ſaw heere the laſt yeere, who wanted hands, and ſupplied the want of them in many particulars by her feete. Exceſſe of number: Such was that Gyant mentioned, 2 *Sam.* 21 20. who had on every hand ſixe fingers, and on every foote ſixe toes, foure and twenty in number. Hitherto referre thoſe whom the Greeks do call ἀνδρογύνους, ſuch was *Hermaphroditus*, the ſonne of *Mercury* and *Venus*, if we may give credit to the notation and compoſition of his name.

(c) Multiplication of ſeverall births is rare. Twins are not frequent in our colder climat, much leſſe the multiplication of Births, yet ſuch we finde recorded, See *Sennertus cap. de Gemellorum generatione*, who out of *Ariſtotle*, *Pliny*, and ſome Moderne Authors deth ſhew the certainty of this. Notorious and in the mouth of every man is that ſtory of *Margaret*, Sutt rto Earle *Floris* the fourth (as *Heilin* relateth it, writing of *Holland*) who being of the age of two and forty yeeres, brought forth at one birth three hundred three ſcore and five children, halfe of them males, halfe females, and the odd one an *Hermaphrodite*. They were chriſtened in two Baſons at the Church of *Loſdunen*, by *Guido Suffragan* to the Biſhop of *Vtrecht*, who named the Males *Iohns*, and the Females *Elizabeths*: all which immediatly after died, and with them their mother: the Baſons are yet to be ſeene in the aforeſaid Church. Thus farre *Heilin*. This miracle, or miraculous accident befell her (ſay ſome) as the juſt hand of God upon her, for that when a certaine poore woman having two children hanging at her breaſts, asked of her an almes, ſhee bitterly upbraided the woman with whoredome, for that ſhee had both thoſe at one birth, adding, that it was not poſſible for a woman to conceive two births at once, except by fornication. A good warning doubtleſſe to all raſh headed cenſurers, who ſpare not to ſpeake of others at their owne pleaſure.

(d) Concorporation of births, is almoſt miraculous, that two ſhould be joyned into one. Yet ſuch there have beene, as appeareth by *Landulphus*, in that anſwer which hee gave to the queſtion. *An et quomodo monſtra ſint baptiſanda* whether at all, and if ſo, then how monſtrous and miſhapen births are to be baptized. A queſtion, that if theſe incorporated Twins had beene borne alive and lived to Baptiſme might have put the Miniſter to his bookes how to proceed in the caſe. The anſwer to the queſtion is this: *Si perpendantur duas habere animas,*

(c) Multiplication: ſtrange in the (d) Concorporation of ſeverall births, but above all moſt ſtrange in (e) quality & kind altered and changed. All theſe, but eſpecially this later ſort, which alter the qualitie and kinde, the Latines call *Monſtra à monſtrando, quia monſtrantur*, I would adde, *ut monſtrent*. They are ſhewed that they may ſhew the ſpeciall handy-worke of God, and though, peradventure deade, yet ſpeake, and tell the forgetful world, that God himſelfe hath a ſpeciall hand in forming and featuring the births conceived in the wombe. Here by the way, let mee touch upon a caſe of conſcience, or two. Whether Monſters and miſhapen births

may

may lawfully be carried up and downe the country for sights to make a gaine by them? Whether the Births being once dead, may be kept from the grave for the former ends? Whether the parents of such births may sel them to another. For my part I would be loth to prejudice the better and morall judgements of any. But to speak plainly, I do make scruple of the first, and therfore much more of the two later cases. For if not living they are to be prostituted to the covetousnesse of any; much lesse being dead, when the grave calls for the bodies of all Christian births: the grave, I say, wherein they are to be laid up: that therein they may lay downe the present dishonor, and thence

utpote duo capita, quatuor brachia, quatuor pedes, duas spinas in dorso, & hujusmods. tunc baptisitur quilibet per se, & intingatur in loco quilibet per se, id est, If you perceive that they have two soules, as thus: That they have two heads, foure armes, foure feete, two backs and backe-bones, and the like: Then let each of them be baptized by himselfe, &c. Of two concorporated and joyned backe to backe, wee reade. The story is remembred in *Rodericus à Castro*, a Physician of speciall note throughout all Europe, as the Title of his Booke doth stile him. He, in *Lib. 1. de Morbis mulierum, cap. 6.* comming to speake of monstrous births, marketh five severall kindes of them (as also before him had *Andreas Laurentius* in his *Historia Anatomica, lib. 8. Qu. 14*) more particularly hee maketh the third kinde to be of them that are defective or redundant. *Quo numero*, saith hee, *comprehenduntur duo illi qui tergo uno pro duobus perfungentes, moribus tamen diversi, viginti annos vixerunt, & cum unus mortem obiret, alter tamdiu supervixit, quoad socij ac germani putrilagine fuit extinctus.*

These two also are mentioned by *Aristotle* in his Problemes. *Cap. De Monstris.*

Two, saith hee, that were joyned backe to backe, and it seemeth as contrary in their maners, as in their lookes. They lived twenty yeeres, and when one of them died, till the putrefaction of that body which could not be separated, did prove the destruction of the survivour. But no mention doe any of the forenamed Authors make of such a birth as this of ours: so that it is likely that they had heard of none such. But proceed.

(c) Quality and kinde: The alteration of this, is of all other the most strange, and indeed monstrous: whether of the whole, or of some part. Alteration of the whole kinde wee reade of: Beasts that have brought forth mankinde births, and women brutish shapes. *Andreas Angelus de Mirabilibus mundi in historia Anni 1597. In Aprili (inquit) Bauigeu in Hispania inusitatum quoddam Monstrum prosubis mundum: quod ex multorum ad varios scriptis illic et Venetiis certò constat literis. Ibi enim vacca, quædam duos vivos et integros omnino homines masculum et fœminam enixa est in lucem*

Sennertus, cap de monstris (so also *Castro* and *Laurentius ibidem. Interdum accidit ut fœmina varia monstra viventia et animalia præter et contra naturam producant. Serpentes, canes, et alia animalia, vel fœtus brutorum partes habentes, et alios eosque variis modis monstrosos genitos fuisse è Lycosthene, et aliis qui de prodigiis et monstris scripserunt, videre est. Neque operæ pretium est historias illas huc adducere.*

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Alteration of parts: *Ex Theatro Historico*, doth Doctor *Beard* relate this History. A certaine Nobleman used every Lords day to goe on hunting in sermon time; which impiety the Lord punished with this iudgement. Hee caused his wife to bring forth a childe with an head like a dogge, That seeing he preferred his dogges before the service of God, hee might have one of his owne getting to make much of. Hitherto referre such strange births as have some tuberous excrescencies. See one recorded by *Castro De Natura Mulierum, li. 3. ca II. quod habebat cornu in capite alas duas, &c.* Here in this towne not many years agoe, when women layed their haire forth upon wires, a child was born which had on the head (as I am credibly informed) grissels growing in the shape and fashion of those attires and dressings.

Castro addeth, *Qui conceptus etsi à causis naturalibus contingant, tamen haud sine Dei providentia fieri credendum est, pro puniendis, et monendis hominibus, iisdemque arcendis ab effrenata et turpi libidine.*

be raised againe in glory. And if the parents may not doe this; how much lesse may they deliver it over to another? But you will say to mee, suppose them living, why may they not be used to this end, beeing fit for none imployment? My reasons are these. Our delight is to be measured by our desires, nor doe I see it lawfull to delight in what may not be desired. And who would desire a mishapen Birth, to be the issue of his owne body? Adde this, all Crosses call for Humiliation: and where that is expected, I see not how there can bee place either for profit or pleasure to bee thought upon:

But to returne againe to what wee had in hand. These Births (as I said) though dead, yet speake and preach to the world the present hand of God in the wombe of the mother.

* In all these accidents and occasions the Philosophers (and physitians also who build upon the ground of Philosophy, nor can well subsist without them) they I say would attribute all these impeditions and alterations of Nature to secondary causes: either internall, as the defectivenesse or excesse of seminall materialls; or externall, as the dulnesse of the formative facultie, or indisposednesse of the Vessells, or strength of Conceit or Imagination.

* *Adfœtus formationem requiruntur tria: sc.*
(1) *Ipsum semen fœcundum utriusque parentis.*
(2) *Sanguis maternus ad nutriendum fœtum.*
(3) *Vterus matris bene constitutus, qui semen conceptum foveat, eiusque latentem vim excitet: supponitur enim vim quandam activam latere in semine (dico autem semen illud quod Græci κύημα sc: semen ex utroq; parente mistum) supponitur inquam vim quandam latere, quam uterus maternus suo calore excitat ad actionem suam peragendam: Horum trium siquid deest: siquid debile sit, aut inordinatum, hinc fit (inquit Philosophus ut vitiosa sequatur conformatio totius, aut saltem partium*

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The Aſtrologer may adde another cauſe, powerfull in his opinion, to pervert and overthrow the good intentions of Nature, *ſc.* the conſtellations of the planets, and configuration of their aſpects. And happily they may pitch upon ſome reaſons for the coalition of theſe two twinnes into one: nor doe we deny but the Philoſopher may bee allowed in theſe his conjectures: nor may hee ſeeme to ſhoot beſide the marke, that ſhould aſcribe it to ſome accident, colliding and daſhing theſe two new-formed Embryons in the wombe, caſting them ſo one upon the other, as that the contiguity and overmuch cloſeneſſe of their bodies cauſed the aforeſaid coalition: ſo have wee ſeene two trees over cloſely leaning one upon another grow into one, and covered with one barke. The Philoſopher, I ſay, may ſeeme to ſpeake reaſon (not ſo the Aſtrologer, at leaſt in mine Opiuion.) Onely he and others muſt bee intreated to looke higher, and to take notice of the ſpeciall hand of God, whoſe worke alone it is to ſort and compound the activities of ſecondary cauſes; that what by the bleſſing of God might have beene otherwiſe, is now thus diſpoſed of for ends beſt knowne to himſelfe.

This is the concluſion which Religion teacheth: and which it becommeth mee as a Divine to put you in minde of. The Aſtrologer is taught to ſay, *Aſtra regunt homines.* The influence of the Starres doe rule the Actions of the ſonnes of men. But the Chriſtian knoweth that *regit aſtra Deus*, God over-ruleth the ſtarres. So that if wee ſhould grant an influence in the planets, and a power in the Conſtellations: yet farre be it from us to account it fatall, and inalterable: No we know that God ſitteth in the Heavens, and doth whatſoever hee will. *David* in the Pſalmes aſcribeth to his hand the framing of his body and members in the wombet. *Thine hands have made me and faſhioned*

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Psa.119.73. Psa.139.13.16. *me. Thou hast covered mee in my mothers wombe. Thine eyes* (saith hee) *did see my substance yet beeing unperfect, and in thy booke all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned:* or (as it is in the Margent) *all of them written, what dayes they should be fashioned*, when as yet there was none of them. To him therefore belongeth the disposing of the materialls and shaping of the Birth: Now then, is God so tyed to his materialls, that if there be too much for one, or too little for two complete and perfect features, hee can neither detract nor multiply? Must his worke bee cut off with what the Philosopher saith of Nature, *Intendit quod optimum, facit tamen id quod potest*: that is, Nature intendeth perfection, but beeing hindered doth what she can?

Let no man therefore taxe me of any excesse in religious thoughts, or count it overmuch curiositie, if I propound to you an observation or two, grounded upon this and the like occasions. Each Comet (as experience hath taught men) is in its kinde Doctrinal, and blaseth forth something or other worthy our observation. *Nec in vanum toties arsere Cometæ*: seldome are those super-terrestriall blazes kindled in vaine. Men do commonly count them *prænuncios belli et calamitatum*, fore-runners of some imminent calamities, and therefore doe call upon one another to appease the wrath of God, by fasting and Humiliation.

Tully, Lucan. Iosep. de bello Iud. lib. 7. ca. 12.

I shall not therefore I hope, transcend the limits of my calling, nor wrong the providence of God, if I take liberty to say, touching this strange-birth, which God hath caused to blaze here amongst us, and from us, to the whole Countrey, to say of it, as the Apostle saith of the bloud of *Abel*; being dead, it yet speaketh. What did or doth the bloud of *Abel* speake, but the irreversible wrath of God against Cain, & in him against all wilfull and malicious persecutours of religious persons? I doe not say, this speaketh

so

ſo bitter things: but yet it ſpeaketh ſomething in common with the reſt of ſtrange and miſhapen Births: and if I deceive not my ſelfe over-much, ſomething in peculiar by it ſelfe: ſo then it ſpeaketh two things, perhaps more, but two I pitch upon, not averring them both ſpoken with the ſame evidence, but both truly: and which is more, ſeaſonably.

Firſt then this, and all monſtrous & misfeatured Births, ſpeake this: That it is a ſingular Mercie of God, when the Births of the Wombe are not miſ-formed: when they receive their faire and perfect feature. A Leſſon truly worth the noting in this forgetfull Age: Mercies that are ordinarie wee ſwallow; and take ſmall notice of them: Such a worke as this cauſeth us to ſee what difference there is betwixt comlineſſe and deformity: betwixt Perfection and Imperfection in the Body. Doth any make ſcruple of what I ſay? Let that man conſider the diſcomfort of Deformitie: How lyable it is daily to exprobration through the evill cuſtome of wicked men, more ready to caſt it in the teeth, than condole or commiſerate, if God hath ſtampt a deformity upon the Bodie. *Obſerva.* 1.

Know wee not that the members of the Bodie are the Organs and Inſtruments of the Soul, in the Service of God and man? Defect or exceſſe muſt needs breed griefe, becauſe it createth trouble. Conſider wee this birth, thus double-membred, to have ſeene them lying upon the table, to ſee them deciphered upon the paper might happily be thought a ſight not much unpleaſant: But let your imagination give them life, and tell mee how uncomfortable, yea burthenſome muſt they be to others, yea and to themſelves: when as though two, yet ſo neere incorporated, that the one cannot helpe the other. How ſhould they eat, ſleep, walke, ſit, or ſatisfie nature, but with much incumbrance

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cumbrance. Is it then discomfort to have a marke of deformity or dis-advantage cast upon the Births of the Womb? And is it not a singular Mercie to have them born compleat in shape and feature? Doubtlesse it is.

All reason therefore is that this Mercie of God unto us in the issue of our Loins should be acknowledged with all thankefulnesse. If other Mercies, why not this? The Husbandman, when hee hath his Corne and Wine increased, when housed: The Merchant, when his Venture is returned: The Owner when his Ship is arrived, and both have made a good voiage: If there be any religion dwelling in their brests, will in a solemne manner confesse before the Sonnes of men the loving kindnesse of the Lord. When women have received safe deliverance from the great paines and perills of Child-birth, the Church doth call them (and surely it had need to call them) to give hearty thanks to God: And ought not this also to be remembred, That the Children borne give hope of Comfort to their Parents? Hope I say, that a faire and well-featured Body may be the comfortable house and habitation of an Holy soule? Doubtlesse it ought: Doth not David intimate so much in the afore-mentioned Psalme, when hee saith, I will praise thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Mervailous are thy Workes, and that my Soule knoweth right-well.

Psal. 139. 14.

Know wee not that God hath just cause to blast every birth of ours, if he would be extreme? Partly, in respect of the abuse of the Bed; which, though hee hath sanctified to the use of man by the benediction of the Church, that so in the sober use thereof every one should possesse his Vessell in sanctification and honour; yet is it too often riotously and wantonly abused. Partly, I say, for these Abuses, but specially in respect of that Originall corruption which cleaveth to the Fruit of the womb, even from

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the first conception, as the Psalmist sheweth. From this gilt and filth not one of all the Race of Adam is exempted. No sooner doe we receave a Being, but it is accompanied with sinfulnesse: In which respect, who can denie, but God might justly blast the body with deformity? Which if hee doe not when hee might, is it not a favour, and so to be acknowledged? Wee acknowledge it a speciall favour to the Soule (as it is reason wee should) that God doth exempt any from that common damnation, which is due to all by Adams transgression: And is it not to be confessed a Mercie to the body? For why? VVhen the body doth want its perfect feature, when the Soule doth want the exercise of wit and reason, more or lesse: Is not this an effect of Sinne, and so to bee accounted: Doth God in this any thing more than what Iustice doth allow? Shall wee say it is an act of his absolute Dominion? I trow not: VVhat is justly done to some, is it not mercie, not to doe to others? Yes (my Dearely beloved) it is Mercie, free and undeserved Mercie: O that in this also, as in other things, I say, O that men would therfore praise the Lord for his goodnesse, and for his wonderfull VVorks to the Sonnes of men! Psal. 51. 5.

Contrarily, when the Hand of Iustice hath found any out, when any birth of ours is brought into the world misformed, and mis-featured: If God hath (as it were) spit in the face, and laid the black-finger of Deformity upon the body, ought it not to bee entertained with sorrow of Heart, and Humiliation? Hath God written in great Letters the guilt of Sin, and in a deformed body drawn a resemblance of the Soules deformity; drawn it (I say) so; that others may see and know, that wee also are defiled in his sight? and shall wee not blush to heare it, to see it thus cast in our teeth, and laid before us?

This for the Parties: but is this all? Is it nothing to you all that paſſe by, or that come to ſee? Mee thinkes it ſhould: Can you, any of you, waſh your hands in Innocencie? are not you alſo Sinners in the ſight of God? VVhat can you alledge, why this might not have beene yours? Did you prevent it by prayer? I truſt you will hereafter: and acknowledge the juſtneſſe of their Devotion, who remember women with child: but happily you have not hitherto thought upon it: If ſo; If God might have throwne the tower of Siloam upon your heads alſo, if ſet a marke of his diſpleaſure upon your births, and yet hath not done it; will you not ſee and ſay, The Lord hath done great things for us? Lord, what am I, that thou haſt ſpared mee? am I more holy, leſſe ſinfull than my neighbour? No, no: It is thy free Mercie and undeſerved Favour, Oh inlarge my heart to praiſe thy Name.

Heere then ſee and bewaile the iniquity and irreligion of this our Age, at leaſt of numbers in the ſame. The common ſort make no further uſe of theſe Prodigies and Strange-births, than as a matter of wonder and table-talk: looke upon them with none other eyes, than with which they would behold an African monſter, a miſhapen beaſt. It was not thus in the better Ages of the world. VVee reade in the ninth Chapter of Saint Iohn: that the Diſciples, when they ſaw the man that was borne blind, they come to our bleſſed Savior, with *Quis peccavit?* Mr Who hath ſinned? See the Religion of thoſe times: They lookt upon ſinne as the cauſe of defective or redundant births. Truth indeed, our Saviour anſwereth: Neither this man, nor his parents. By which Speech of Chriſt, wee muſt not thinke that they are excuſed from all ſinne: doubtleſſe his parents had ſinned; and conceived him in ſinne, elſe had not this beene caſt upon him: No place for defects and deformities in the ſtate of Innocence. But why

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God ſhould take the forfeiture in this, rather than in his Neighbour, this was meerely *Ex Dei bene-placito*, the good pleaſure of God, who had in this a purpoſe to prepare and make way for the glory of Chriſt in curing the man.

The ſame happily might bee ſaid in theſe occaſions whereof wee ſpeake: To the Queſtion, *Quis peccavit*; Who hath ſinned? happily Chriſt (who was acquainted with the Counſels of his Father) might anſwer; *Neque hic, neque parentes*, Neither he, nor his Parents: Not to exempt them from ſinne altogether, but to teach us, that ſome other end & purpoſe God had beſide the viſitation of their ſin: (though that alſo we find ſomtimes to bemanifeſted, when God by ſuch occaſions doth awaken the cõſcience to confeſſe ſecret and unbewailed ſins) beſide, I ſay, the viſitation of ſin: Somtimes to diſcover the Atheiſm, Irreligion of many, perhaps alſo their Covetouſneſſe, who would rather make a benefit of ſuch births, & inſtead of Humiliation for a Croſſe, teach the parents to account ſuch births for bleſſings, which doe prove ſo profitable. Sometimes to prompt unto the Miniſterie a word of exhortation needfull for the preſent ſtate of the people: A meditation which happily his text would not afford him. *Ex. gr.* This Leſſon, as you ſee, is by this occaſion prompted to me, preſented to you: That you remember hereafter, to acknowledge it as a Mercie: when Children come into the world well-featured, the members of their body in a due proportion aptly each to other correſponding, neither defective, nor redundant: To bewaile it as a croſſe from God, when it is otherwiſe: that ſo penitencie may provide a Remedie, either of the deformity by the hand of Man; or of the diſcomfort by the ſtroke of Death.

This

This Leſſon, I ſay, is now preſented to you, and I truſt will bee remembred by you: And if ſo; the Anſwer to the Queſtion may goe on as it is in the words of our Saviour. Neither this man, nor his parents, but that the works of God ſhould bee made manifeſt in him.

To winde up this firſt obſervation in a word, I noted the religion of the Diſciples: they looke up to ſinne as to the cauſe of Gods Hand: nor ſhall it miſbecome us to doe the like: provided alway, that it bee (what they forgot) in our owne occaſion rather than in anothers. Doe I ſuffer? Let mee ſay, Lord, I have ſinned; Thou art juſt. Doth another ſuffer? Let mee ſay, Lord, thou art mercifull to me: this caſe might have beene mine. Bleſſed bee thy Name for ever.

Something long have I ſtood upon this, becauſe I am ſure this is a Leſſon, which all monſtrous and miſſhapen births, though dead, yet ſpeake for the Inſtruction of the Living: I will diſpatch the other more briefely, which may ſeeme to bee peculiar to this one in reſpect of the ſhape thereof.

Obſervat. 2. The twinnes you ſee are males; brothers, had they beene borne alive. To love as brethren, is the duty of Chriſtians: a Duty frequently remembred by the Apoſtles, and powerfully preſſed. To love, is to have one ſoule in two bodies; One, not ſo much by union of eſſence as by combination of Affection: And lo, here a fit reſemblance of this mutuall duty: As fit, as lively almoſt as can be deviſed: Here are all the parts and members of Conſultation, and operation for two perſons; onely here is one body, one breſt, one belly: the breſt the ſeat of the heart, the belly of the bowells: One I ſay, not in the Identity of ſubſtance

ſtance; but in the conglutination of externall parts from breſt to belly: whether one heart, one liver, one community of Inteſtines, is more than wee could ſee; though all reaſon indeed giveth them to be two throughout in all parts: yet you ſee, ſo two in one, that had they lived to the yeares of expreſſion, wee might well have expected from them united hearts, intire affections, and more than Sympathie, each to other, as to himſelfe. Surely, theſe are not more neerely conjoyned in breſt and belly, than Chriſtians ought to be in heart & affection. Theſe two were one body; Chriſtians are one ſpirit: though ſeverall bodies and ſoules, yet one and the ſame ſpirit diffuſed into all, to enlive and quicken all. Nor would it have beene more prodigious for theſe Twinnes (ſuppoſe they had lived to bee men) to have quarrelled and conteſted one againſt another: than it is for Chriſtians to quarrell and contend, ſpecially to live in the minde of irreconciliation. To theſe Twinnes (had they quarrelled) a man might have ſayd, you are one body: To Chriſtians a man may well ſay, You are one ſpirit: why doe you wrong one to another? Was that an Argument in all reaſon fit to compound the ſuppoſed differences of theſe? And ſhall not this bee able to perſwade peace, nay love among Chriſtians? Mee thinketh it ſhould: Nay, I am ſure, if this doe not prevaile, the faultie perſon ſhall one day ſmart for it: perhaps when Repentance for it will come too late. *Cor.* 12. 13.

Wel, I have now acquainted you with my thoughts. I have ſhewed to you, how this Birth, though dead, yet ſpeaketh: Truth it is, Faith alone hath eares to heare theſe Leſſons, theſe Inſtructions: Nature is deafe, and Reaſon dull in theſe occaſions: A brutiſh *Pſ.* 92. 6.

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man knoweth not; neither doth a foole understand: Faith quickneth the Vnderstanding to apprehend: the Will to believe: the Affections to take pleasure in these Meditations.

Which Faith, since it is the gift of God, let us now turne our selves to him with hearty devotion, desiring him to bestow upon us the gift of Faith, and all graces, by which wee may learne to make an holy use, as of all his Workes in generall, so of this and the like in speciall: to the glory of his Name, and the eternall comfort of our owne soules, through Iesus Christ our Lord. To whom with the Father and the blessed Spirit, Three excellent Persons, one glorious God, be ascribed all Honour and Praise, now, and for evermore.

Amen.

FINIS.

E. 1. 12[illegible].

A DECLARATION,

Of a ſtrange and Wonderfull MONSTER: 16

Born in KIRKHAM Pariſh in LANCASHIRE (the Childe of Mrs. *Haughton*, a Popiſh Gentlewoman) the face of it upon the breaſt, and without a head (after the mother had wiſhed rather to bear a Childe without a head then a Roundhead) and had curſt the PARLIAMNET.

Atteſted by Mr. FLEETWOOD, Miniſter of the ſame Pariſh, under his own hand; and Mrs. *Gattaker* the Mid-wife, and divers other eye-witneſſes: Whoſe teſtimony was brought up by a *Member* of the Houſe of Commons.

Appointed to be printed according to Order: And deſired to be publiſhed in all the Counties, Cities, Townes, and Pariſhes in England: *Being the ſame Copies that were preſented to the Parliament.*

London, Printed by *Jane Coe.* 1646.

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